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6 November 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director for Intelligence

FROM: Douglas J. MacEachin
Director of Soviet Analysis

SUBJECT: First Results of Soviet Interview Project

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to bring you up to date on the Soviet Interview Project (SIP); no action on your part is presently required. [redacted]

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2. As you will recall, SIP is a large-scale survey research and in-depth interview project designed to comprehensively tap the knowledge of recent Jewish emigres from the USSR. The project is being conducted by a Research Team of academics [redacted]

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[redacted] and is funded jointly by CIA and DoD through a contract between the USG (State is the monitoring agency) and the National Council for Soviet and East European Research. The contract began in 1981 and is scheduled to run through summer 1986. The project consists of two parts: a broad, three-hour opinion survey of some 2,800 respondents (the G Schedule) and about 16 specialized in-depth interview projects (the S Schedule) covering various political, social and economic topics (see Tab B). The G Schedule has already been administered in the field and analysis is now underway, while work on some S projects is currently going forward. [redacted]

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3. On 30-31 October the SIP Research Team presented a sampling of its initial findings from the big survey in a meeting at State attended by SOVA representatives and officials from DoD and State (see Tab A). Our people were encouraged by what they heard at the meeting, and we anticipate that important new insights will emerge from the survey which will be helpful not only to the analytic community but to those responsible for communicating directly to the Soviet population. In the coming months the Research Team will be preparing manuscripts on the G Schedule. Meanwhile the S project interviewing will accelerate. The Research Team is also working with a group of German scholars doing a similar study of opinion among ethnic German emigres from the USSR,

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with potentially important comparative results that will be available later this decade. [redacted]

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4. Although the Research Team is just beginning to look at the responses to the G Schedule, some intriguing preliminary judgments were nevertheless offered at the 30-31 October meeting. The data seemed to suggest, for example, that:

- On a series of indicators, younger people were more likely to be dissatisfied than older people with regime performance. (This appeared to be a reversal of the relationship discovered in the early 1950s Harvard Interview Project, in which it was the older people--who remembered the pre-Stalin period--who were the most dissatisfied.)
- Relations among ethnic groups in the USSR were perceived as getting more strained rather than improving as stated in regime propaganda. While 50 percent of the respondents thought these relations were getting worse, 42 percent thought they were not improving and only 2 percent thought they were getting better. But judgments varied substantially by region.
- On a series of questions related to preference for state/collective vs. private/individual control (medical care, heavy industry, rights of accused, right to strike, agricultural organization, residence permits), there appeared to be a consistent trend among younger age cohorts to favor privatization--although the absolute level of preference varied widely by issue (an overwhelming majority even of the younger group favored state provision of medical service, while, at the other extreme, about 60 percent were opposed to state control of place of residence through residence permits).
- A marked change for the worse was taking place in the role of "merit" as opposed to "connections" in job assignments (see Tab D).
- In the past several decades there has been a marked increase in attempted military draft evasion (see Tab C).
- In flat contrast with regime propaganda, there has been a marked increase in inequality of wealth: 30 percent of families had no savings, 46 percent of total savings were in the hands of 10 percent of families, and 32 percent of savings were in the hands of 5 percent of the population. Forty-four percent of total personal wealth was in the hands of 15 percent of the population.

- Private economic activity contributes to growing inequality of wealth, but the extent varies greatly by sector. Overall, the hourly personal income return on private economic activity compared to state sector economic activity is eight to one, but for doctors the ratio is 42 to one.
- It was fairly unanimously agreed that there had been an absolute decline in productivity, and that this was explained broadly speaking by lack of incentives, poor working conditions, bad housing, etc. The majority of respondents thought it would be possible for plants to fulfill their plans with substantially fewer workers.
- Nevertheless there was more firing of poor workers than one might have expected, and in some sectors (but not all) there was a significant fear of job loss.
- The hypothesis of some Western economists (for example, [redacted] [redacted] that "forced savings" (due to low demand for the poor quality consumer goods available) constitute a major problem for the regime appears not to be valid.

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These preliminary judgments are hedged with many qualifications, naturally, and are subject to further refinement. There are also major methodological questions that must be answered before they are extended even to the non-Jewish urban educated population, much less to the entire Soviet population.

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5. In 1985 we plan to sponsor a major conference at which there will be a full-dress presentation of findings from the G Schedule. [redacted]

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6. At the moment our main concern is to expedite the transmission of funds to SIP. This may require that CIA assume responsibility for monitoring the contract through which SIP is funded. Overall, we are confident that the payoff from the project will be commensurate with our investment and expectations. [redacted]

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DOUGLAS J. MACEACHIN

Attachments:

- Tab A - SIP Research Team Agenda
- Tab B - Approved or Likely S Projects
- Tab C - Sample Survey Results
- Tab D - Sample Survey Results

SUBJECT: First Results of Soviet Interview Project

Orig - Addressee

- 1 - DDCI
- 1 - ER
- 1 - ExDir
- 1 - DDI Chrono
- 1 - DDI Reg
- 1 - D/SOVA
- 1 - DD/SOVA
- 1 - PA
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A

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B

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Survey Results

The Role of Influence in Obtaining First Job

<u>Year Began First Job</u>	<u>Did you use pull or favoritism to get your first job?</u>	
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1917-1930	2 6.9%	27 93.1%
1931-1935	7 11.7%	53 88.3%
1936-1940	7 14.0%	43 86.0%
1941-1945	5 10.6%	42 89.4%
1946-1950	13 20.0%	52 80.0%
1951-1955	17 25.8%	49 74.2%
1956-1960	44 35.5%	80 64.5%
1961-1965	38 32.8%	78 67.2%
1966-1970	42 31.8%	90 68.2%
1971-1975	61 43.6%	79 56.4%
1976-1983	29 50.9%	28 49.1%
<u>Total</u>	265 29.9%	621 70.1%

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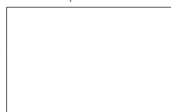
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Survey Results
Efforts to Avoid Military Service
Among Soviet Males

<u>Period</u>	Did you try to avoid having to serve?	
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Pre-Stalin (before 1930)	2 5.6%	34 94.4%
Stalin (1930-1940)	0 0%	58 100.0%
WWII (1941-1945)	7 5.7%	116 94.3%
Late Stalin (1946-1952)	6 7.2%	77 92.8%
Early Khrushchev (1953-1959)	13 8.7%	137 91.3%
Late Khrushchev (1960-1964)	13 14.8%	75 85.2%
Brezhnev 1 (1965-1969)	21 16.0%	110 84.0%
Brezhnev 2 (1970-1975)	30 26.3%	84 73.7%
Brezhnev 3 (1976-1980)	16 29.6%	38 70.4%
Missing	23 31.9%	49 68.1%
<u>Total</u>	131 14.4%	778 85.6%

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